

THE QUIVER

Saturday, April 15, 1871.



"The good people of the farm welcomed them"—p. 477.

TRIED.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "A STORY OF VIONVILLE."

CHAPTER V.

MAY had strong powers of self-control, and nothing was further from her purpose than to pain Sidney Leigh by the sight of her distress. She soon recovered herself therefore, and looking up at him with a smile, said, "You will think I have a long story to tell, but I want you to know what happened to me after my father was thus taken from me, as I know that it must influence my whole future life."

VOL. VI.

291

"My dear May, all you tell me is most interesting to me, I only fear that I am trying you too much in letting you go on with such sorrowful details."

"Oh no, for all that is sad is told already—I mean the earthly separation between my dear father and myself; what I have to say now is only joyful—at least in its results. The blow had fallen, then; I had no longer a father upon earth, and when I saw that it was so, I lost all command over myself, and fell down on the ground at his side, crying out in bursts of anguish that seemed to tear my very heart asunder. How long I remained in this state I cannot tell, but suddenly I heard a voice, deep and stern, and full as it seemed to me of an awful authority, that said to me, 'Stand up!' I started, and lifted my head, which I had laid down in the very dust, and I saw before me the man on whose breast my father's dying head had lain; he was towering above me, for he was very tall, with his deep eyes fixed upon me, glowing as with fire, and his long black hair streaming back from his wan, spiritual face.

"'Stand up!' he repeated, 'stand up, child of God. What do you there, grovelling in senseless grief, when you ought to be lifting heart and eyes and hands in joyful praise to the Eternal Father, for the wondrous mercy that has beamed forth from him this day?'

"As he spoke he stooped down, and with one effort of his strong hand, set me on my feet, and held me there facing him, while his eyes seemed to penetrate my very soul. His look, his accents, completely subdued me, I could only stammer out, as if to excuse the grief which had appeared so natural before, 'It is my father, and he is dead!'

"'Dead!' he exclaimed, 'say rather, as he himself said, alive! alive with his Master for evermore. Do you not know that to live one moment, as he does now, in presence of the visible love of Christ, is worth more than a life made up of all the years that have passed over this great world since God first called it out of space?'

"'But for me,' I said, 'who am left on earth, to be without him is terrible—without his love, his care on to the very end of my existence here.'

"'The end!' he said, almost with a laugh of scorn, 'the end of what? of a dream, a shadow, a little needful discipline, a momentary waiting on the threshold of the Home; but the beginning—the beginning of eternal rapture, of deathless satisfaction, the accomplishment of the purpose of our creation, the perfection of our being! Oh, child, surely they never can have told you of the Love that fought with death upon the cross, and conquered—there first, and then in every ransomed soul that rends the flesh and flees to Him, or you could not stay weeping your unmeaning tears over the deserted prison-house, from whence the free glad spirit has escaped on wings of joy. Come, and I will tell you the story of Eternal Love,' he added, in a voice that

suddenly grew soft and tender, like that of a mother speaking to her child; and taking me by the hand he drew me towards a large stone, where he sat down, and made me place myself at his feet; and then, laying his hand on my head, he began to speak with a wonderful pathetic eloquence, which pierced my very heart through and through, and overwhelmed me completely.

"I seem to hear him still, and see the strange scene all around us—the clear blue sky overhead, the walls of the old quarry, which were draped in creeping plants and moss and lichen, folding us in as if to separate us from the whole living world, and the calm majestic form of my dead father, lying before us in his unutterable peace, with the sunshine falling over him. Sydney, I cannot repeat to you all the words, burning as with fire from heaven, which this man spoke to me at that solemn hour; I only know it was as if the voice of God himself had suddenly revealed to me the secret of our being—the meaning of the dim, incomplete existence we have to pass through here, in order to reach the true, the everlasting home which is his love. He showed me that love, taking our very nature, not only to redeem it, but to bind it to himself in indissoluble union, that, bathed in his purity, freed from every touch of evil, all the longings of our hearts might be satisfied for evermore in his eternal tenderness. He described him agonising for us through the bitter weary life, the awful death, and told me how that he was now yearning to gather us into his bosom with unspeakable desire, till I felt as if my heart would break with the thought of all my coldness and carelessness, my whole life through until that moment. Then, after he had spoken long, he suddenly took both my hands in his, and exclaimed, 'Child, will you not give yourself to him, as he has given himself to you, that in you he may see the travail of his soul and be satisfied?'

"'I will—I will,' I answered, thankful to find some way of easing my heart of my sense of ingratitude, which seemed to weigh it down to the dust.

"'Then go,' he said, 'kneel down by the body of your father, and render back to Christ the living soul he bought for himself in his twofold agony of life and death; so shall the newly-enfranchised spirit give thanks at his feet that already his dying prayer is answered, and the child of his love, still lingering on earth, is as truly one with his Master as he is himself who sees him face to face.'

"And I did as he desired me, Sydney," continued May, colouring as she spoke; "kneeling with my father's cold hand in mine, I did give myself to Him who bought me with his anguish, to be his in life, in death—for ever."

She was silent for a moment, then added in a still lower tone: "I hope—I mean—to keep that vow, cost what it may."

Sydney made no answer, and there was complete

silence between them for a time; at last the feeling of suspense became intolerable to May, and she raised her eyes to Sydney, with so speaking a look of anxiety as to what effect her statement had had upon him, that he answered at once her unspoken question.

"My dear May, I can well understand that, under such extraordinary circumstances, when your nerves were shaken and your feelings strongly excited, the impassioned eloquence of this fanatic preacher should have made a strong and lasting impression on your mind, and provided you do not think it necessary to lead a gloomy and constrained existence in accordance with it, there may be no reason to regret it. I know that certain natures, imaginative and poetical like yours, require the stimulus of some sentiment which raises them above the everyday concerns of life; and at all events, dearest May, you may be quite sure that I would never interfere with the religion of any person with whom I was connected; we must all judge for ourselves in such matters."

The termination of this speech of Sydney's rendered it impossible for May to reply to it in any way, as had she done so, she would have seemed to accept his allusion to their possible marriage, and the more strongly she felt her heart drawn to him, the more was she determined not to let him be bound by their former ties, till she was well assured that he really desired it for his own sake. Secretly, however, she was glad not to have to answer his remarks, for she did not care to admit to herself what they really implied, so far as his own opinions were concerned. She had eased her conscience in the meantime, by making an open profession of her personal faith and hopes to him, and now she was only too glad to let the subject drop, as being perhaps the only one on which it might not be possible for her to agree with him. She rose up, suggesting to Sydney that they should prolong their walk into the village, to see some of the old people who remembered him, to which he gladly consented, and they sauntered away together through the shrubberies of Combe Bathurst, and then down the green lanes to the various cottages they wished to visit.

Was ever spring day so sweet to May Bathurst? or did ever the sunbeams shine so fair as now, when they fell softly on the dear head of him who had come over the seas, to fulfil all the dreams and longings of her loving heart! It seemed to her as if she had never known happiness before, as she went with him from house to house, and saw how he charmed the poor people by the gentle courtesy of his manner to them, and the patient sympathy with which he listened to the long details of all their troubles.

"It must be a beautiful generous nature which can act as he does," thought May, "and what a blessing I should bring on all our people if I could ever set him as master over them," and she clasped

her hands tightly in the depth of her intense longing that no obstacle, either on her part or on his, might ever come to prevent that final consummation of all her most cherished hopes.

CHAPTER VI.

So for a month May Bathurst lived in a very dream of happiness. She would not let herself look beyond it, but gave herself up, heart and soul, to the charm of Sydney's presence, learning each day to love him more, if that were possible, and feeling the links that bound her to him growing closer and closer, till they seemed so entwined with her very life, that to part from him would, indeed, have been more bitter than the bitterness of death itself.

Sydney obeyed her in saying no word of love, or of a desire to renew their engagement, till the prescribed month was over; but his purpose had never altered from the time when he left India, on hearing of her father's death. He fully intended to marry May Bathurst, and to become the possessor of her fair estate and substantial income; yet, though he liked her well enough to be quite satisfied with the prospect of passing his life in her society, Sydney Leigh did not love this noble, true-hearted woman as he should have loved her, who was to become the wife of his bosom, a very part of himself, and a sharer in his inmost being. It was impossible for any one to be much with May Bathurst without becoming attached to her more or less; she was so frank, so warm-hearted, so earnest, and so unselfish; but the affection which Sydney felt for her was as far removed from the passionate love of which he was capable towards the woman who should really win his heart, as light from darkness. Strange to say, he had arrived at nearly thirty years of age without having had his deeper affections roused by any one; he had had moments of passing enthusiasm when some especially fair face had come across his path, for his artistic tastes made him a positive worshipper of physical beauty, but no real or serious attachment had ever stirred the depths of passion which, all unconsciously to himself, lay dormant in his somewhat complex nature. Of May he had always thought only as a dear little cousin—though in reality not related to him—whom it was his destiny to marry, for no better reason than that she possessed the good things of this world which were lacking to himself; had the cases been reversed, and he himself the possessor of a goodly estate, it is not on May Bathurst that he would have bestowed it, as he well knew.

The great bane of Sydney Leigh's character, obscuring all the finer qualities he really possessed, was his indolent love of ease and self-indulgence, which made him willing at thirty years of age to give up his military career, and subside into a mere amateur artist, living on his wife's property, and having no other occupation in life than to reproduce

on canvas the forms of beauty which presented themselves to his poetic mind; for Sydney had a real genius for painting—sufficient, indeed, to have enabled him to make it his profession, if he had possessed energy enough to go through the needful labour, and such a degree of honest self-respect as would have conquered the shallow pride, which made him fancy it beneath him to trade with his talents, as he would have expressed it. It was this same mental indolence which had made Sydney Leigh a passive unbeliever in the Christianity he had virtually abandoned. He had held the faith he had received by inheritance, without any intellectual effort of his own, until he went out to India, where he found himself exposed to the power of modern scepticism, which was rife among the officers of his regiment and other young men who had lately come from England; he had never sifted the grounds of his own belief—which was, in fact, a mere theoretic assent to the doctrines he had been taught, and not an actual living principle in his own soul. When he found himself, therefore, in an atmosphere of doubt, where those great truths were insidiously assailed, which reason cannot measure, but which the conscience and immortal spirit of man can unerringly recognise, he found it much less trouble to admit than to refute objections, especially as when the question was thus brought vividly before him he saw clearly that if he were to stand forth as the champion of his childhood's faith, it would involve an amount of endurance and active exertion for which he was quite unprepared; and also that if his religion was to be a reality at all, it must act as an energising power for good in his whole life, doing battle, if need be to the death, with all that was unworthy of the servant of Christ in his nature. He could not face the thought of this perpetual struggle, this daily dying to self, so he gladly yielded to the infidel arguments which seemed to release him from all such obligations, even if they took from him also an immortal hope which he never had really embraced or appreciated. His intellectual pride was gratified at the same time by the assumed superiority which placed the Scriptures and the Zendavesta on an equality, and made arrogant comparisons between the Brahminical doctrines and those of Christianity. So, surely and swiftly the light, always a mere reflection from the faith of others, faded out of Sydney Leigh's mind and conscience, and although there was in him no active antagonism to prevent the possibility of its ever being re-kindled, his negative unbelief was for the time being an absolute power in his character, governing all his thoughts and actions, and pervading his whole influence on others.

And May Bathurst knew this—knew it in the deep secret of her soul, long before the month was over wherein she still was free to refuse to bind her life to Sydney's, if she chose; but she could not bring herself to face the truth. A deadly terror lay un-

acknowledged in her innermost conscience, that if she were to be indeed purely, truly faithful to her dedication of herself to Christ on the day of her great loss, she must not link herself in bonds of holiest union to one who was his avowed and actual enemy; but she never admitted the thought to herself—she never dared to look upon it—it was to her as an impossible, an unendurable pain, which it did not seem that she could ever take into her heart and live; she never let her mind turn to it for an instant, but plunged herself recklessly into the one great joy of Sydney's presence, and abandoned herself to the sweet intoxication of her present happiness, without looking on into the future at all. Day by day they rode out together over the fair lands which May was to bring as a dower to her husband, or sat in the little studio she had fitted up for Sydney, while he painted gorgeous scenes of the East, or flung on the canvas some weird imagination of his own, which showed what depths of unstirred feeling yet lay dormant in his soul. Then in the evening Sydney would lie back luxuriously in his chair, while May sung to him many a sweet old ballad, with a pathetic thrill in her clear young voice, which seemed strange in one so happy as she was then.

So the month of probation glided away on golden wings, and May woke one morning to know that it was gone.

CHAPTER VII.

Yes, there came a morning when, as May Bathurst opened her eyes from her deep, childlike sleep, the thought smote upon her that this day might be the crisis of her fate; but with the thought came the instant resolution not to let her mind dwell upon it even for a moment. She knew that it might involve a terrible struggle between her heart and her conscience, and she would not—dared not—think of it. Perhaps Sydney would forget it, she said to herself. At all events, she would occupy herself only, for the present, with the pleasant prospect of an expedition they had planned for that day to an outlying farm of her own, situated at some distance among the hills. Their dear old aunt had promised to go with them, if the weather was fine; and it was lovely—a bright spring day, with carolling birds and violet-scented air. How delightful it would be! She was to drive the pony-phæton, with her aunt beside her, and Sydney was to ride. They would dine at the farm, and not return till the evening; and May let her mind employ itself solely with the details of this proposed pleasure, while she dressed, on the morning of the day which she well knew might possibly bring her face to face with the most momentous question of her life. She continued the same determined avoidance of the subject in her own thoughts, as well, of course, as in words, when she joined her aunt and Sydney at the breakfast-table.

Full of life and gaiety, she kept talking and laughing over their plans, allowing no time for any other subject to be introduced; and while Mrs. Leigh looked at her lovingly, pleased to see her so gay, Sydney glanced towards her with a smile, which showed that he very well understood the reason of her apparent excitement over an excursion such as she had often made before.

At the appointed hour May's pretty little phaeton came to the door, with the plump, spirited ponies which she was to drive herself. Sydney helped his aunt to take her place in it, and made every arrangement for her comfort with the greatest care and tenderness; then, when May had lightly sprung into her seat without his assistance, he mounted his horse, and they started at once under the cloudless morning sunshine, which gave every promise of a beautiful day.

And very pleasant was their progress through the smiling country, clothed in the first delicate beauty of the spring, till they reached the lonely mountain road which led to the distant farm. Here all signs of human habitation were left behind, but the breeze was fresh and pure, and they wound through plantations of larch and fir growing on the side of the hill, which filled the air with aromatic scent, so that they were almost inclined to feel regret when at last they reached their destination, although it was an unusual exertion for Mrs. Leigh to go to so great a distance.

The good people of the farm welcomed them with delight, for May was a great favourite with her tenants, and soon they had brought out the very best the house afforded for their refreshment, and entertained Miss Bathurst during dinner with a full account of all that had been done on the farm since she had last visited them. Amongst other details, the farmer's wife mentioned that the child of one of their ploughmen was lying very ill in the cottage which the man occupied, a little way further up the hill; and May at once resolved to go there herself, and ascertain if she could help the poor people in any way. Sydney had agreed, at her request, to make a sketch of the charming view which was visible from the door of the farm, and Mrs. Leigh was anxious to rest for an hour before returning home; so there was nothing to prevent her stealing away by herself, after dinner, on her errand of mercy.

The cottage she wished to visit stood in a very desolate spot among the rocks, quite shut out from all sight of the farm by the brow of the hill which intervened between the two houses. Slowly she toiled up the steep path leading to the ploughman's hut, not lifting her eyes till she was close to the door. Then she looked up, and started, almost with a feeling of terror, for a tall man was standing right in front of her, whose fixed gaze showed that he had been watching her intently for some time. Shrinking back involuntarily, she lifted her eyes to

the dark worn face, and then saw that she was looking on the remarkable man who had worked so great a change in her own inner life, at the period of her father's death. It was Evans, the preacher, who stood before her, and she would have expected to feel only pleasure at the meeting, but there was a depth of meaning in the keen penetrating gaze he had fastened on her face, which somehow woke a strange uneasiness and dread in her heart. She tried to speak to him; she tried to avoid the solemn questioning of his deep stern eyes, but she found herself unable to utter a syllable, or to move from the spot, where she first became aware of his unexpected presence. He addressed to her no words of ordinary greeting, but continued for some minutes to hold her with the look that seemed to be reading into her very soul; and then suddenly he grasped both her wrists with the iron clasp of his thin muscular hands, and said to her, in the deep authoritative voice which had last spoken to her in the presence of the dead, "Child, how is it with you? Are you true? are you steadfast? are you, in heart and soul, purely, unreservedly, solely, the servant of the Crucified?"

A strange trembling seized May, which was unaccountable to herself. As yet certainly she had not consciously failed in her allegiance. Why it was that this solemn voice sounded to her like that of a judge addressing a criminal, she could not have told. She tried to rally her sinking courage; she forced herself to answer, stammering and dismayed, "I think so—I hope so—I wish to be His, indeed."

"Do you remember the solemn offering of yourself, which you made by the side of your dead father?"

"Oh yes, yes!" she said, with quivering lips.

"Take heed, then, that the gift which God would have returned to you in love and blessing, through all the eternal ages, become not to you, by means of your own betrayal of his truth, the seal of everlasting woe and loss."

With that he let slip her hands out of his grasp, and went on his way down the hill at so rapid a pace that he was almost immediately out of sight.

With her heart beating and her knees shaking under her, May went on to the cottage as if in a dream. She could not tell what the preacher had meant. She could not reason on his words, or so take them into her mind as to make them an influence on her future actions; she could only feel stunned and depressed, and as if a dark, cold shadow had suddenly fallen over the sunshine of her life. She entered the little hut, where a child was lying moaning in its pain on the only bed the place afforded, with a weary, pale-faced woman sitting beside it.

(To be continued.)

GIVING AND TAKING.

BY THE REV. SAMUEL COX, NOTTINGHAM.

ALTHOUGH no such saying is recorded in the Gospels, St. Paul tells us (Acts xx. 35) that the Lord Jesus used to say, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." And this, like other sayings which tradition ascribes to him, is quite in the heavenly manner. It would not task our faith to believe that Jesus spake these words, even though we did not receive them on the authority of an inspired apostle. They ring true. They are of the heavenly mint. "Good money-changers" would be in no danger of refusing them. The words contain just one of those axioms of Divine wisdom which were frequent on the lips of Christ—one of those pregnant maxims which, if it cross our surface impressions, is found to be in perfect accord with our deeper thoughts.

It is better, "it is more blessed, to give than to receive." This is the Divine truth concerning giving and receiving; but it is by no means a self-evident truth to some minds. All men are not good money-changers; the rules of the heavenly exchange are not familiar to them; they think "giving" very poor thrift, and "receiving" the true blessedness. If you take this Divine maxim to a man whose heart is in his purse, he will be apt to reply, "That is your rule, is it? Well, try it on with me. You give, and I'll take; and let us see who gets tired first." And, no doubt, he will wag his head, and think himself monstrous shrewd as he laughs over his wit and your anticipated discomfiture. But talk with him for a few minutes, and, if he will listen, you need not despair of converting even him to your point of view; for if the maxim sound romantic, too refined for human nature's daily use, nevertheless it *is* in daily use, and commends itself to common sense no less than to intelligence and piety. Get him to think, and the most prosaic, grasping soul alive will soon admit that it is at least more agreeable to give than to receive. The giver, at least for the moment and so far as the matter in hand is concerned, takes a higher position than the receiver. Out of his penury, or out of his abundance, he confers a boon, bestows a favour, rivets an obligation. The receiver is bound, by the courtesies of social custom, to feel grateful to him, or to feign a gratitude he does not feel. Hence it comes to pass that to receive a gift gracefully is so much more difficult than to confer one; to do a kindness so much easier than to accept it. Even children are sensitive to the difference between giving and receiving. Fond as they are of getting presents and "tips," they are still fonder of saving up their pence and exhaust-

ing their ingenuity in devising liberal things, in choosing or making some gift, ridiculously useless for the most part, to those whom they love. There are few prettier sights than to see a little child, its face all blushes and smiles, bring its tiny offering to father or mother on some birthday festival; there are few more healthy emotions than the pride and glee with which the little one sees its gift duly received and admired. Its heart swells with a gladness far sweeter and nobler than the frank joy with which it pounces on any gift you may bestow upon it, although that also is very pleasant to see. And among men the same rule holds. Point our friend of the purse to a man with the soul of a pauper, living all his days off the alms-basket, creeping and cringing through life with open supplicating palm, his eyes glittering with ravenous hunger for good things he has neither courage to seize nor energy to earn, and ask him whether *that* man answers to his ideal? whether *that* is the life he would choose for himself? or whether, having earned a competence or a fortune by sagacious industry, he would rather be known as a benefactor than a beggar, as helping on the best interests of the town in which he lives, and raising many a poor down-trodden soul from the dust? Our friend need not be a Christian, he need only have the soul of a man in him, to confess that "it is better to give than to receive."

But the Lord Jesus used to say, not simply, "It is better," but "it is *more blessed* to give than to receive;" that is, it is more Divine, more god-like. God, who receives so little, gives all. The very utmost we can do for him is to return him his own again with usury. He fills his eternal year with an incessant bounty. The very law of his life is self-impartment, self-sacrifice. Else why did he create earth and man? He is sufficient to himself. Our goodness extendeth not to him. Dwelling in the perfect ineffable delights of his single yet manifold being, he had no need of us or of anything that we can do—no need except the need of infinite love. To surround himself with creatures to whom he could give of his own life, whom he could train through sun and shadow, sorrow and joy, to enter into his rest; by labours and sacrifices which transcend our thoughts to make them partakers of his Divine nature and eternal peace; to give, and give, and always give; to crowd earth and time, heaven and eternity with his good gifts; and, all gifts in one, to bestow himself upon us—this has been the work of God, this *his* commentary on the words, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

This blessedness he invites us to share. The

Gospels convey his invitation in many forms. They tell us of Him who causes his sun to shine and his rain to fall on the evil and unthankful, as well as on the good and just; and they bid us be perfect even as our Father in heaven is perfect. As the main object which the Gospels set before us is the cross on which the Son of God sacrificed himself for us men and our salvation, so their chief and most urgent command is, "Deny thyself; take up thy cross, and follow me." The man bending beneath the cross, and finding in his burden a joy which transcends all sensuous delights—this is the symbol at once of the life of Christ and of the Christian life.

The symbol is true to experience. All who have borne the cross are forced to avow that they have never known a joy so divine, a peace so quick with energy and hope, as when they have denied themselves to do good to men. It does not matter at what stage of experience we take them; in every stage they find that self-sacrifice is the road to blessedness. Whether they have only subdued the cravings of fleshly appetite in order to walk after the spirit, or have also put away opportunities of wealth and distinction in order to serve God with tongue or pen: whether they have run counter to their natural bent, giving up pursuits in which they took delight, to devote themselves to studies which would render them better able to serve their generation according to the will of God; or whether they have denied the purest affections of the heart, giving up the sacred delights of home that they might be more efficient ministers of the Word: whether the cross has been laid on sense or ambition, or intellect or affection, they have with one voice confessed that "it is more blessed to give than to receive;" that, repugnant as it is to flesh and blood, self-sacrifice is after all the true, the supreme law of life, the law, in obedience to which alone man is made one with God.

Who has not found that the cross, patiently borne, sheds sweet and healthful balms into the soul? Did you ever give half your meal to a starving beggar; or sit up, when you sorely needed rest, with a sick neighbour; or subdue the repugnance of a delicate nature and culture to go into some vile haunt with help for body and soul; did you ever really strain your purse-strings till they well-nigh snapped in order to render efficient aid to some good enterprise: in short, have you ever really denied yourself in order to do any good, without having your heart suffused with a glow of satisfaction such as your daintiest pleasure never yielded you—without feeling that for the time you had risen into both a manlier and a diviner life than that you commonly lead? At other times, indeed, you may close your eyes on the truth; in your longing for pleasures sweet to physical or social appetite, you may live by another law; but in

your hearts you *know*, and know beyond all doubt, that "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

There is yet another meaning in this saying. "It is more blessed to give than to receive"—that is, giving carries the greater blessing with it. "To give to the poor," whether the gift be of money or thought, sympathy or help, truth or life, "is to lend to the Lord." And God is a good paymaster. He is never much or long in our debt; he repays all sacrifices made for him "a hundredfold, now in this present time." Giving, we get, and spending, thrive.

But let us distinguish between things which differ, lest we indulge a false hope or sink into a false despair. If we give up sensual enjoyments for God, God will not repay us with sensual enjoyments, but with greater independence of them. If we give away money in his service he may not pay us back in money, nor in money's worth. If we give up a night's rest to comfort a sick neighbour, God will not miraculously impart the rest we have lost, and make us feel as strong as though we had kept our bed, though he will repay us with a sweeter and profounder rest.

It is very difficult, I admit, for those who have not entered into these experiences to accredit them. The sacrifices God asks them to make seem substantial enough, and the rewards he offers not a little shadowy and uncertain. Yet surely even these may see, if they will, that appearances are very illusory and misleading. Which do you call substantial, that which lasts for a few hours or a few years, or that which endures for ever? Which is doubtful and evanescent, the pleasures that tickle the senses which perish, or the joy and peace which sweeten and enlarge the immortal soul? Nay, even though we shut out the future from our thoughts and look only to the present, we shall still find that the gifts of God are better than the pleasures of the world, if only we keep *the whole man* in mind and his true nature. The radical mistake made by those who live to the flesh is, that they conceive of man as an animal rather than as an intelligent spirit, and therefore suppose that the whole round of his rewards and punishments may be summed up under the terms "pleasure" and "pain." But the fact is that in the complex being of man the spiritual is far more and higher than the animal, and the terms "pleasure" and "pain" are very far from covering his motives to this course of action or that. For the true man, "pleasure" is not by any means the best thing, nor "pain" the worst and most dreadful. "Duty," and the satisfactions which wait on duty, are infinitely before either. Many a man, to discharge his duty or advance his cause, has cheerfully encountered the most terrible forms of pain, or foregone the most alluring incentives of pleasure. And these are precisely the men whom we all acclaim,

while the poltroon who shrinks from duty, because it is difficult or perilous, is every man's scorn. The fact is, as we all feel, that the satisfaction which comes of doing right in scorn of consequence is infinitely sweeter and profounder than any mere pleasure; and that the shame and degradation which spring from doing what we know to be wrong are infinitely more dreadful than pain, though they include pain. And, therefore, God the Giver rewards us when we suffer pain for him, not with a corresponding pleasure, but with that inward peace and blessedness which, as we have seen, are of so much greater and more enduring worth. We have "the hundredfold," even though we never regain the money, or the pleasure, or the social position, or the scholastic fame, or the domestic happiness which we have given up for him; for *to be* is infinitely better than *to have*, to be good than to have good things; and every sacrifice we heartily make for him makes us more like the All-Good. We have "the hundredfold," though and because the earthly coin we expend in his service be repaid in heavenly coin, and for any pleasure resigned we have the peace which passeth all understanding, and for any sacrifice endured the blessedness of being "satisfied with his likeness."

Only thus, indeed, does our hope of reward

become unselfish. For to sacrifice present good in hope of getting a corresponding but larger and more abiding good some day, although it may be very prudent, is not self-sacrificing. It is simply to seek the largest amount of self-indulgence which is open to us. But to sacrifice a present good in order that we may become like God, what is that but to sacrifice a present good in order that we may gain a larger power of self-sacrifice and find a deeper joy in using it? To have all our faculties developed, all our affections raised and purified, and to employ them all in His service whom we love—this, after all, is the truest reward, the loftiest and most complete. And this is the reward that comes to us, not when we are seeking gain or craving reward, but when we are content to do good, hoping for nothing again.

The River of Peace runs hard by the Path of Duty; but we shall never find the sweet cool waters while we look for them alone; we shall come on them when we least expect it, and while all our care is to keep the path. But then, when once we walk beside the still waters, beneath a bright and open heaven, then, most of all, we shall enter into the profound satisfactions of a divine service, and feel through every fibre of the soul that, as the Lord Jesus used to say, "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

THE BALUSTRADE.

I.

FRONTING the sunset shore, we stood
Leaning against the balustrade,
Whose urns of blossom were ranged above,
Within the wavering cypress shade.
The headland's cliffs were rosed and bright;
The fountain shook—a sheaf of light;
As your hand in mine was clasped, and Love
Held both, faint odours blew around.
The space of glory on the flood
May chance it was that dazzled so
Your eyes; they rested on the ground;
Not even a whisper in the glow
Blent with the sighing waves below.

II.

Upon the sunset shore I stand,
Looking upon the bleak, grey sea;
The sky is blank with cloud and haze,
And a cold wind blows inconstantly
From the drear inland's shadowy breadth
Of wintering wood and searing heath;
While bursts and sinks the wat'ry blaze,
Scattering the o'erblown blossoms on
The lonely marble steps nearhand;
And in my heart, so light of yore,
A sad pain settles, as the sun
Sinks, and along the desolate shore
The darkened seas begin to roar.

DAYS IN THE HOLY LAND.

CHAPTER VI.—THE PLAIN OF JEZREEL (*continued*).

BY THE REV. F. W. FARRAR, M.A., F.R.S., HON. CHAPLAIN TO THE QUEEN, AND MASTER OF MARLBOROUGH COLLEGE.



IN the slope below the city were some of the black tents of the Bedawin; and their occupants, with half the population of the village of both sexes and every age—sat down to watch the pitching of our tents, and all our proceedings. Not content with the ordinary distant

gaze, they seated themselves exactly in front of the tent-opening, so that we could not leave it without stumbling over them. Achmet was indignant, and remonstrated. It was in vain. He asked for the Sheykh, who, when travellers come without tents, superintends the hospitalities (?) of the Medafseh, or square tower,



(Drawn by W. SMALL.)

"—Your hand in mine was clasped, and Love
Held both"—p. 440.

which serves as a sort of inn; but on this occasion there was no Sheykh. The former Sheykh had been killed or superseded in some local quarrel, so that "every man did that which was right in his own eyes." In vain Achmet—who was never so happy as when he was dilating on his own or on our importance—dwelt upon the homage due to the Franghi Umerâ; the Arabs simply smiled, or "gorgonised him from head to foot with a stony Arab stare." Our own expostulations were a little more effectual; the Arabs removed a few feet away from the door of the tent, but sat wrapped in their abbas in a long oblique line of dusky faces on each side. Treating them, however, with the utmost good humour, my friend I—took out his "*Rob Roy* on the Jordan," and, sitting down in the midst of them, began to show them the pictures. They were highly amused at this—the old no less than the young; and they laughed particularly at the pictures of all the little black boys dancing round the canoe in Lake Menzaleh, and the Arabs of Lake Hulêh (the Waters of Muom), carrying the *Rob Roy* captive, with Mr. McGregor sitting in it. As the darkness began to fall they gradually retired, and left us in peace to enjoy our dinner. Profound silence fell on the village and plain; the horses and mules, picketed around us, quietly browsed all night upon the herbage. We strolled into the open air as the moon rose in a splendid orb over the mud hovels and mounds of rubbish which once were Jezreel, lighting up the broken sarcophagi and fragments of ruin scattered here and there around it. And when we went to bed, the bats—congenial to that place and scene—were squeaking and gibbering about our tent.

Next morning we were up betimes. It was always necessary to see our tents and baggage in motion and the mukariyeh settling down to their day's work before we started. This was our only chance of finding our tent pitched for us, when we rode in tired to our destination at sunset. The mules, heavily laden as they were—in spite of their speed and strength, which caused me daily astonishment—of course went more slowly than our little Arab horses; but they often went by short cuts and better roads; and they did not stop for an hour at midday, as we did, for lunch and rest; and they also gained upon us in those very steep up-and-down hill-roads, which often compelled us to dismount and leave our horses to follow us. In order to enable Abdallah and his assistants to pack up our tent, we generally breakfasted *al fresco*, indifferent to the admiring gaze of the assembled Arabs. This morning, however, a passing shower prevented this, and while we were availing ourselves of the shelter as long as we could, it was curious to see the tent gradually disappearing all around us as we sat at table. It called up forcibly

before my mind the image of some unfortunate life, stripped bare of its blessings one by one, and at the approach of old age left shelterless and exposed to all the winds of heaven. But no melancholy thought could long infect us. The bright days, the novelty, the healthy simplicity of our life, the deep absorbing interest of the places we were visiting, the land, with all its hallowed associations, lying like an open Bible before us, all tended to make us happy and thankful, and to give us thoughts—

"Pleasant as roses in the thickets blown,
And pure as dew bathing their crimson leaves."

We were soon mounted, and left Zerîn with regret, casting many a look around us before we rode away. Little as its hovels recall the glowing palaces and Phœnician splendours of royal Jezreel, no curse of successive conquests or continued desolation—not even the curse of Turkish misgovernment and Bedawîn ravage—can efface the natural loveliness of the scene—the bright vegetation which marks the course of the Kishon—the green plain lying in the bosom of so many encircling hills—the sweeping outlines of Gilboa, Little Hermon, and the mountains of Zabulon. Achmet lingered behind us, to deliver an oration to the assembled Arabs, and particularly to one old man, who, though not a Sheykh, appeared to hold a leading position among them. In default of any more exalted personage to whom to impart his knowledge of the world, Achmet condescended to enlighten him. "These," he said, pointing to us, "are Franghi Umerâ. You ought to have received them hospitably and with distinction. Instead of coming to stare, and crowding in front of the tent, you ought to have been civil and respectful. Instead of bargaining with us for water, you ought to have been in a hurry to bring it for our use. Then we should have been pleased with you, and given you good backshish; and then we should have recommended other travellers to stop and encamp here, and it would have been an excellent thing for you poor people in every way. Instead of that, you tried to get as much as you could for the water, and of course I beat you at the bargain, and you did not get half so much as you would have done if you had trusted to our generosity." And so on. "Poor fellows," said Achmet, who has the highest opinion—not wholly unjustified—of his own practical ability, "they are ignorant; they don't understand; they have seen nothing of the world. *I teach them!*"

Leaving his oration to take effect, which apparently it did if one may judge from the submissive remarks and deprecatory manner of the Arabs, we rode off. The women of Jezreel had all been to the fountain—that fountain once so celebrated and frequented—to draw water for the day's use in their large earthen pitchers; and we met the

entire procession of them bearing their pitchers, sometimes simply balanced on the head, sometimes supported with one arm. There were none who, like Rebekah, carried their pitchers on the shoulder—a mark, I believe, of higher rank. These women appeared to be a poor, miserable, careworn race of drudges. Even the youngest of them showed no vivacity or brightness, and they render themselves more ugly than they are by tattooing their faces with little blue dots, rudely intended for stars and flowers, but arranged for the most part in a perfectly accidental and meaningless manner on the chin, forehead, and arms.

Our whole ride to-day was perfectly delightful. The air that blew down from the hills was so cool, and sweet, and soft, that on this spring morning it was a "luxury to breathe the breath of life." We soon came to one of the streams of "that ancient river, the river Kishon," which though here, and at this season, it is a mere narrow rill, yet is clearly traceable for a long distance by the green path it leaves—like all streams in these Oriental countries—"filling its bosom with gold," as an Arab writer expresses it, "and scattering its path with emeralds." Here we saw our first pelican. It was sufficiently tame to allow me to ride close up to it before it attempted to fly, and I could see to perfection the very curious way in which it is obliged to give several oblique hops with its long legs and webbed feet, before it can gain impetus and room enough to spread its great white wings. We passed and repassed the streams of the Kishon several times to-day, and as our horses struggled to draw up their hoofs which stuck deep in its mud, we could easily understand how terribly at flood-time, and during a driving storm, it must have retarded the flying ranks of Sisera's iron chariots. At our right rose the rounded hill of Tabor, on whose broad summit Barak had encamped, and from which, at the bidding of the prophetess, the faithful band of Issachar and Naphthali had rushed down upon their foes.

Just as we had passed the Kishon we saw an Arab boy at his breakfast, which was of the most primitive kind. He had caught a ewe of his flock, and held it by the leg, while he was eating his black bread. Whenever he wanted to drink, he did so straight from the full udder of the ewe, and when he had finished his breakfast he let it go. The quiet and patient manner with which the animal awaited his pleasure showed that it was perfectly accustomed to this unceremonious treatment.

Passing the little village of El Füleh—the scene of Kleber's immortal achievement—we rode for some miles between the vast green corn-fields, rich with Nature's own embroidery. Like the gold and purple and scarlet and crimson of the

high priest's girdle, the flowers made a perfect chord of the most exquisite and harmoniously blended colours. We could not stop to botanise, but as we rode along it was easy to distinguish the bright and dazzling blue of the alkanet and the blue pimpernel, shading off into the azure of the chicory, the deep purple of the bugloss, and the transparent, veined, delicate colours of the meadow geranium; and there, too, were the scarlet hues of numberless poppies and pheasants'-eyes interwoven with the deep or pale pink of many species of mallow; and all these rich or pure colours were commingled with the pale gold and vivid green of numberless euphorbias. The sweet profusion of flowers, like Milton's

"Crocus and hyacinth with rich inlay,"

forming a natural mosaic in the springing corn, and rippled by every tender breath of vernal wind in the morning sunlight, formed one of those delightful combinations which it is impossible ever to forget; and each separate impression helped to furnish its quota of innocent pleasure to "one of those heavenly days that cannot die."

At length we reached the base of the range of limestone hills that form the frontier of Zabulon, and struck into a rugged path up a cleft, to the right of which towers the cliff which, by an absurdly improbable tradition, has received the name of the Mount of Precipitation. The steep mountain-path winds upward along the hill-side, barren, except for cyclamens and other flowers that peep out of the rocky crevices. Below it is a narrow but smiling and singularly peaceful little valley, with bright green patches of cultivation here and there. A strange rushing sound over our heads makes us look up, and we see a great flight of pelicans on their way to the Kishon, all flying one behind the other in long separate strings. Here every sight and every sound was to us full of unusual interest, because we knew that the general natural features of the country and the customs of its inhabitants remained unaltered; and these must have been the very sights and sounds which delighted the human feelings of the Son of God during the long years of his infancy, boyhood, and early manhood passed in this singular and smiling vale. He too must have often looked up at the rushing wings of the pelicans. In the paths that divide those narrow but delicious fields below us, his boyish feet must have often strayed. He must have sat by that little well; and the young, bright-eyed shepherd-boys, who stop their merry chatter to gaze at us as we ride past it, must have been dressed like him. Myriads of famous pilgrims of every age—from the Empress Helena to Godfrey of Bouillon, and from Godfrey of Bouillon to Napoleon I.—have traversed these narrow winding

paths which form the only access from the south to the village of Nazareth. The thought of them would have added an interest to any other scene, but they added none to this. Our imagination or our historic memories never reverted to any one of them. They were all forgotten in the one absorbing thought that here *He* lived; that the holy feet of his boyhood must often have clambered about these hills; and that, as *we* catch sight of it now, reining our horses on the summit of the

ridge, so *He* must often have caught, at this very spot, the first view of his home, nestling, as the little town now nestles, in the hollow of the hill. For there—the chief goal of our happy pilgrimage—built in part upon the ledges of the rock and clinging to the sides of the precipice—its church-tower and minaret and white houses sparkling in the sunlight that seems to love to rest upon it—there, not a quarter of a mile in front of us, lies

NAZARETH OF GALILEE.

JOHN HESKETH'S CHARGE.

BY ALTON CLYDE, AUTHOR OF "UNDER FOOT," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER LXVII.

"IS IT TROUBLE, UNCLE?"



LOUISA WESTBROOK and her sister were on a visit to a relative residing in the north of England, and during their absence Eva was left in charge of the household—a mark of confidence to which Barbara had yielded a somewhat reluctant consent. She disliked the idea of Eva filling her place, even for a short time, for the old jealousy was not yet crushed out. She distrusted the influence which her little country cousin was visibly gaining over the minds of those about her. Under these circumstances Barbara would have sacrificed the pleasure of the visit, and remained at her post as housekeeper, leaving Louisa to take the journey alone, if she had not been acted upon by two restraining motives, which proved powerful enough to withhold her refusal. The first of these was an unwillingness to have it known that she could allow herself to be influenced by feelings her generous-minded sister would have indignantly repudiated; the second was her desire to make one of the pleasant party that would be gathered in the country-house to which they were going—a party rendered doubly attractive to Barbara from the fact that the masculine element was certain to be well represented—which was no trifling consideration for the young lady, who felt conscious that her youth was passing away. She had given up the hope of winning Lionel Elliott, whose continued insensibility disgusted her. Thus it chanced that the sisters went together, and Eva found herself installed as housekeeper with the duties of both devolving upon her; for, in addition to Barbara's domestic cares, she had to pay her uncle the little attentions which had been Louisa's special province. This new demand upon her exertions at that time proved a blessing to Eva, for it gave her mind a fresh spring of action just when it was most needed to divert her thoughts from the subject of Edward Arden, and keep them from fretting in the one painful current. The old

grandfather was glad for his darling's sake. It pleased him to see her in the position of authority, giving orders to the servants, and conducting the domestic machinery quite as ably as her cousin Barbara.

It was about a week after the departure of the sisters that Eva noticed a change in her uncle that filled her with apprehension. He seemed to be labouring under some great mental depression, and once or twice came home looking so careworn that in her alarm she would have written and confided her fears to Louisa, only that she shrank from marring her pleasure, so she decided to wait and see if the cloud passed.

She was sitting at work one evening after her grandfather had gone to rest; Mr. Fenwick had not yet returned from the City, and she was becoming anxious; for, contrary to his custom, he had not sent a note to say that he was likely to be detained; he was usually so considerate for those at home. She was still busily plying her needle, more with the idea of beguiling the passing hours than for any amount of work which she expected to get through, when she was startled by the sudden opening of the door and the entrance of her uncle. As she had not heard a ring at the door-bell, she rightly guessed that he had let himself in with his latch-key.

It was a pale, agitated face that met her inquiring glance, and she noticed a nervous twitching about his mouth, which might arise from great mental pain.

She dropped her work, and going forward to meet him, asked hurriedly, "Are you ill, uncle?"

He caught both her hands in his, and held them a few seconds before he spoke, looking down at her with an expression which she did not understand, then he said brokenly, "Not in the sense you mean, my child; yet I am sick at heart."

The girl's eyes wistfully interrogated him, as she faltered, "Is it trouble, uncle?"

"Yes, child, it is; such trouble as you are far from guessing." Here he hesitated, then added hastily, "Perhaps it will be best to tell you first, Eva; you have lived in the shadow as well as the sunshine."

He led her to a chair, and put her gently down in it; then for some minutes paced to and fro in the room, as if nerving himself to the task before him. At last he sat down, and with his face buried in his hands said, "The trouble, Eva, is the breaking up of one of the dreams of my life. It has not come suddenly, child; I have seen it for years, and have done all in a man's power to avert it. The crash has come; for just as I was leaving the office to-night, I heard that a firm, who are in my debt for upwards of thirty thousand pounds, have suspended payment. It means that they are ruined, Eva, and unable to pay their debts; and where I expected to make thousands, I have lost nearly all I had. During the last few months we have been passing through a financial crisis. This morning I thought I was a rich man, that my position was better than it had been for years, but to-night I am a hundred degrees poorer than you."

Eva's large eyes dilated as she listened, repeating to herself her uncle's last words. The announcement was so utterly unexpected, that she could scarcely realise the full meaning of what she had heard.

Her uncle continued: "How shall I break it to the girls? It is for them that I grieve more than for myself."

"Can nothing be done, uncle?"

"I fear not, child."

Eva had risen from her seat, and was standing before him, her cheeks flushed, and her eyes bright through the tears that suffused them, and laying her hand gently on her uncle's arm, said, "There is the money my dear father left me; it is not much, but it may be of some use; please take it, uncle."

"What, and leave you penniless! I could not do it, child."

"I can work, uncle; you forget I was my father's pupil. He taught me music and many other things; I have not yet been tried, but I feel sure that I can earn money."

Mr. Fenwick placed his hands on the bright young head, as if he were blessing her. "My good little girl, your brave spirit puts me to shame for my own weakness, but I cannot accept your generous offer—that is not to be thought of, Eva; I owe you too much already."

"Owe me, uncle!"

"Yes, child; I am going to make a confession, which I have put off in the hope of being able to make restitution, but I have no such hope now. It may lose me your respect and confidence, but it is right that you should know."

Eva looked at him in wondering silence.

He went on: "What I have to tell relates to the past. I was nearly ten years older than your mother; we were the only two surviving from a large family, and when our father died, my young sister's portion was left in my hands in trust for her. There was a time when my affairs became in-

involved, and to extricate myself I used Jame's money, intending to pay it back, but the greed for gain grew upon me, and I let the years pass without righting the wrong. My sister forgave me, but she and her husband lived in straitened means, and that money would have done them good—that knowledge has been a reproach to me, and my punishment is complete now that I have not the means to repay it to their child."

His voice broke as he finished.

Eva crept close to him, whispering, in her sweet simple way, "My dear father used to tell me that a fault repented is more than half atoned for. Why grieve about the past now, uncle? you have enough to trouble you in the present; and as for the money, why, I cannot miss what I have never had or expected to have."

Her gentle ministry was not without effect, for Mr. Fenwick caught some of the light of that hopeful spirit, and under its influence was gradually won to face the difficulties of his position with a better heart.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

TAKEN TO TASK.

JOHN HESKETH had made up his mind to take Edward Arden by surprise and meet him on his arrival in London. He kept his word, and on the 15th of October left Lowfield, where he was now established, by an early train, but, owing to an accident, it was detained, and John had the mortification to reach London Bridge station just in time to miss the train from Dover, which had arrived about five minutes before him. What was to be done? If Edward Arden acted out his intention to visit Eva before proceeding to Lowfield, he would not have many hours at his disposal, and John had no time to lose if he wished to see him before an interview took place between him and Eva. It did not take more than a few minutes to decide. A cab was called, and in the vague hope of overtaking his friend, whom he presumed to be then on his way to Mr. Fenwick's, John was soon whirling through the busy streets at a pace which was scarcely swift enough to satisfy his impatience.

It was the day following that on which the uncle had confessed his embarrassment and sought the sympathy of his niece. There was as yet no outward sign of change. The staff of well-trained servants went about their duties as usual, and the house still gave the impression of substantial worldly respectability. As the cab containing John Hesketh entered the square, a Hansom was just leaving Mr. Fenwick's door, and John caught a glimpse of a figure on the steps whom he knew to be Edward Arden. He saw him give his card to the servant, and reached the door in time to prevent it being closed, and to overhear the man's answer to the visitor's inquiry. "Yes, Miss Ashton is at home."

John's appearance elicited an interjection of surprise from Edward. They shook hands in the old familiar way, but each felt the presence of an indefinite restraint that fell between them like a shadow.

The friends had been shown into a small parlour which Mr. Fenwick had had fitted up as a library, and which communicated with one of the drawing-rooms by folding-doors. The servant who had taken Edward's card came back with a message from Miss Ashton—

"She would be disengaged in a few minutes, and would see Mr. Arden."

Both the friends seemed ill at ease. Edward was the first to speak.

"I had no idea you were in London, Hesketh. I suppose business brought you up?"

"No; I came purposely to meet you."

The answer took Edward by surprise, for he could see by John's manner that there was something wrong. His eyes plainly interrogated him as he said, "I think I told you in my last letter that I intended going on to Lowfield the same day that I arrived from Dover. After I have seen Eva I shall have nothing to detain me in London."

"Does she expect this visit from you?"

"Yes. May I ask in return if you are here with her knowledge?"

There was something in his tone which John felt disposed to resent, but he quelled it by an effort of his strong will, and said quietly, "She does not even know that I am in London. The purpose of my journey was to see you, and when I found that I had missed you at the railway station I hurried on here to see you, if possible, before you met Eva. Happily I am not too late."

Edward's face flushed as John went on: "I heard unpleasant rumours about you, Ned."

John might have read what he feared in the tell-tale changes on Edward's face as the young man said, "How is it you are acquainted with my actions? Have you been playing the spy?"

A look from John Hesketh warned him, and he added, "So a harmless flirtation is the cause of this visit from you."

John's eyes lit with sudden fire; he was getting hot and angry.

"Do you call it harmless to play with hearts like toys? It is both dishonourable and cruel, Edward Arden. You evade my question. You remember that I once warned you not to try to win Eva if you could not fully trust your own heart in the future. Answer me, have you kept your faith like a true man, and do you bring back to her an undivided heart?"

The strong nature was holding its sway over the weak one. Edward had the startled look of a hunted animal brought to bay as he faltered, "What right have you to judge between me and Eva Ashton?"

"The right which her dying father gave me when

he left her my charge; besides, I answered to him for your truth and honour."

"I tell you, Hesketh, you have no right to interfere; she is nothing to you."

"Nothing to me!" John repeated, with a strong heave of his broad chest. "Must I tell you the secret of my life? Know, then, that I have loved Eva Ashton since she was a child, dearer than anything else in the world; but when I saw you two getting to care for each other, I fought a battle with myself, and stood aside that I might not be a bar in the way of her happiness and yours; I meant to take this secret to my grave, but you have forced it from me."

Edward's impressionable nature could not help being touched by that unexpected revelation of generous sacrifice and self-conquest. He burst out impulsively, "You loved Eva all these years! who would have thought it? And I never to guess—loved her, yet gave her up to another without trying your chance. John, old fellow, how could you do it?"

"I did it for her sake and yours."

CHAPTER LXIX.

"IT IS ALL OVER, HESKETH."

Eva was writing to her cousins when the servant brought in Edward Arden's card, which she received without any sign of embarrassment or emotion. It was hastily glanced at, then laid down, and after giving her message to the man, she turned to finish her letter. As Edward had told John Hesketh, his visit was expected by Eva. He had written to prepare her for his arrival one of the short notes which he had usually sent her of late. A few minutes after the servant was gone, she rose and put away her writing-materials. As she passed down-stairs her heart throbbed wildly in anticipation of the coming interview. This agitation increased when she entered the room where she was to see Edward, and she found it necessary to wait a few minutes to compose herself before summoning the servant. It was the room adjoining the library, but the folding-doors of communication were so seldom used that a couch had been drawn before them, and a curtain of crimson drapery concealed them from sight; it was on that couch Eva sat to recover her self-possession. The next moment her attention was arrested; she heard voices from the next room. One of these sounded excited and angry, and, to her surprise, she recognised the voice of John Hesketh. The servant had not mentioned his arrival, and until now she was ignorant of his presence in the house. Finding that unless she changed her seat she could not help overhearing the conversation going on in the library, she was about to rise, when her ear caught words that chained her to her seat. Herself the subject of the talk, John Hesketh taking his friend to task about his life at Naples, followed by the revelation of his love; link by link the chain was being unravelled to

her, and just as though she had been present, her mind grasped the hidden meaning of Edward's feeble protests and evasive replies. "My word is pledged; I could not break it even if I wished, for I am bound by honour."

The words seemed to sink into her heart.

"I will hear no more," she said, pressing her hands upon her forehead, as she started from the couch and rang the bell.

When the servant entered she was standing before the window, with flushed cheeks and eyes glittering with strange brightness.

"Show Mr. Arden into the drawing-room, Barlowe, I will see him there."

"Bound by honour," she repeated as the door closed. "If that is all that holds him, he shall be free; I would break the bond between us even if it broke my heart."

With that last thought on her mind, she entered the drawing-room.

* * * * *

Half an hour later Edward Arden re-entered the library. John was still sitting by the window; he seemed to have fallen into a reverie from which the opening of the door did not rouse him. He did not raise his head until Edward came and stood before

him, startling John by the altered expression of his face.

"It is all over, Hesketh."

"What do you mean?"

"It is all over between me and Eva; she has cancelled our engagement."

John gave the speaker a wondering look, repeating the words, as though he doubted what he heard. The next moment he rebuked himself for the feeling of uncontrollable joy which for an instant had leapt up in his heart. It was human, born of the love which it had been the battle of his life to conquer. Why should he rejoice? Eva was still only his adopted sister, and he would be no richer for what Edward had lost.

The young man continued, as if warding off some expected accusation, "She did it of her own free will, John; I had no thought of what was coming. She was so calm, too. I could hardly realise that it was Eva Ashton; she is changed."

"Edward Arden, is it not yourself that is changed, and she has felt it?"

Edward's eyes fell before John's earnest look, and he faltered, "I never meant it to end like this."

"You should have kept out of temptation, Ned. It was not honourable of you, and you cannot blame Eva."

(To be concluded in our next.)

STORIES OF "THE QUIVER COT."—I.

LITTLE Sarah F., the first occupant of the "Quiver Cot" at Great Ormond Street, was sent to Margate in May last, instead of having her leg amputated, and returned to the hospital in September so fat and rosy that she was hardly to be recognised. She stayed a few days in the hospital to receive many congratulations, and also some presents which kind friends had sent for her, among others a large doll and some clothes. Her father and mother both came to fetch Sarah, and there was much laughing and rejoicing among them. Good treatment in the hospital, and sea-breezes afterwards, did great things under God's blessing for happy little Sarah, and now she is able to go to church and sing in the choir without the help either of the crutches or the wheelbarrow.

Among the saddest and most painful of all the cases are those whose sufferings have been caused by burns, and their effects—i.e., contractions after the wounds themselves have healed. There were three cases of this kind in the girls' ward for some months, and one of them, the most serious, was for about three months in the "Quiver Cot." The name of the little patient was Martha, a dear pretty blue-eyed pet of four years. I often looked at the pretty face as I passed, and could see nothing of

disfigurement, but I did not examine too closely for some time, as she was shy and seemed to dislike being noticed.

One afternoon, however, when she had seen me several times, she ventured to take the opportunity of her nurse's absence, and the advantage of my being a comparative stranger, to ask timidly for "a drink of water, please."

I got the water, and helped her to rise in bed enough to take it comfortably. Then I saw that all one side, the sweet little fair face and neck, the tender white arm, and even the poor little baby side, was drawn and scarred by the cruel fire.

"Does it hurt you now, poor little Goody?" I said.

"Not when they don't pull it," she answered; "it did hurt me when I done it first, all the time, and now it's better. I fell into mother's fire and done it."

I saw that the arm was much contracted, quite bent and useless, and the nurse told me it was to be straightened.

The next time I saw poor little Martha, she was lying as still as ever, with a two or three pound weight attached to her arm, and hanging through the bars of her cot. She was perfectly good, and used to lie for hours watching the other more for-

fortunate children who could run about. I am afraid the days were very long and tedious to the dear little patient girl. She used to look so wistfully through her bars when the others went into the garden, and sigh over the toys, while she tried hard to be amused by them. Some elder girl would devote herself to playing with and pleasing her on these occasions, poor little child. Then twice a week came the delightful "visiting day," when the loving, careworn, and, in most instances, dirty mothers, came with expectant faces into the wards, on Sundays followed by the shy, rough, but, oh! so tender-hearted fathers.

Such a polishing up of little pale faces, and such a violent brushing of little curly pates, took place on those days, the moment dinner was swallowed; and happy the child whose nurse could find a pink or blue hair-ribbon for her, or who could "tell the clock" for herself and neighbour. All were usually in a state of high expectation and preparation by one o'clock, and some pretty well worn out by the time three sounded from the church close by. Then, what shrieks of delight, and loud crying for very happiness, from the smaller children! Little Martha's cot was out of sight of either of the doors, so she could only lie still with clasped hands of expectation, and white face, with a bright pink spot on each little cheek. Nurse's efforts at amusing conversation with her came to nothing; her whole soul was filled with the one idea, "Mother's sure to come;" and never, though their home was at a considerable distance, did the little mother disappoint her little child.

The meeting was always touching. The loving little patient child, and the fond, foolish, weak mother, so full of absurd and improbable stories about the future that awaited the child's return home, and what she would bring "next time." Against all rule, this pertinacious little woman would get her child unlimited "drinks of water," and give the much-enduring nurse advice as to the treatment and management of her child's case. On one occasion, when she was informed that she must not bring any kind of food for her child, she gravely said, "But she is starved, poor thing, and there is an abscess coming under her arm. I'm sure she never will get over it." The father usually sat perfectly silent, with one little soft white hand in his, great tears often rolling down his brown face. He held the sick child in great awe and reverence. Rather an old man, he had seen but little of his child before her sad accident, and as he quaintly said, "It seemed a shame for little uns to suffer so

bad; it warn't right, somehow, and she were such a pretty creetur."

At last the dreadful operation took place, very painful and sad, and the poor little child suffered intensely, not at the time itself, as chloroform was, of course, administered, but for days afterwards she dreaded the least touch, and when the dressing of her arm was necessary, she always begged in most touching ways to be "put to sleep." "Oh, doctor," she would say, "do let me go to sleep; I will be good and go to sleep. Give me that stuff—do give me that stuff," before even a bandage was removed.

The little maimed arm was a sad sight for many weeks, and required the greatest care. The hot days of July tried the strength and spirits of the poor child, and every one was glad when she was able to take a little air in the garden. By slow degrees the dreadful wound began to heal, and little Martha was dressed every day, and ran about with the other children who were sufficiently convalescent. She was very proud of her cot, and used to simper and bridle just a little when she was pointed out as belonging to the "Tiver Tot." She was dressed in the prettiest frock and pinafore that could possibly be found for her, and very proudly she marched about, glad enough to be on her feet again.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

138. Give the exactest date in the Book of Judges.
139. Who was it said, "Let all thy wants lie on me?"
140. On what occasion is the first intimation given of a line of Jewish kings?
141. Mention the circumstances under which a prophet declares himself to be no prophet—not even a prophet's son

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 416.

126. Judges xiv. 12; Ezek. xvii. 2.
127. He is typical of Christ. He preaches repentance; and when in the whale's belly expresses confidence that God would not suffer him to see corruption.
128. Micah v. 1. "They shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek."
129. Joel iii. 10. "Beat your ploughshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears."
130. Luke xxiii. 56. "And rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment."
131. By the centurion at the cross. "Truly this was the Son of God."

"THE QUIVER COT" FUND.

We shall be glad to receive any Lists which may still be out, as it is desirable to close the account without further delay. A statement of the Fund will shortly be laid before our readers.—ED. Q.